The Interspecies Newsletter

Winter 1999

Published Quarterly by Interspecies Communication Inc.

Becoming Active

Interspecies Communication Inc. was originally chartered in 1978 to provide a non-profit funding umbrella for a group of activists working full time to put an end to the killing of dolphins at Iki Island, Japan. As the organization grew, those of us involved grew weary of assuming a confrontational stance as a basic modus operandi. Political activism is more often *against* wasteful or cruel activities than it is *for* the good or the helpful. No activist lasts very long in the environmental business unless he or she is willing to be identified as the enemy of those being prodded to change.

By the mid-1980's, IC's focus had shifted away from political activism, and toward more creative solutions that nurture longterm perceptual changes in the way our culture actually views nature. Our projects became less about saving animals, and more about communicating with them. Nonetheless, our concern for animal preservation and habitat has remained unwaivering.

We at IC were naturally dismayed when the US Marine Mammal Commission granted the Makah Indian tribe of western Washington an "aboriginal dispensation" to kill up to five gray whales per year. This permit was granted even though the International Whaling Commission had turned down the Makah' request. As the opposition geared up to oppose the hunt, IC was called upon by a few activist groups, including Sea Shepherd Society, to provide consulting about "redirecting" the grays movements using underwater sound. I suggested that orca sounds played loudly enough into the water would definitely alter the grays'migration path, and conceivably prompt them to dive before a whaler could get close enough to throw a harpoon.

I was eventually invited to become more directly involved by providing IC's underwater sound system as well as the necessary orca calls, with myself servng as the onsite technician. But with the US Coast Guard vowing to forcibly stop such tactics, IC's lawyer counseled me against participating directly in any act that might lead to arrest and seizure of equipment. He believed IC could lose its non-profit status. Two of the groups involved in the "anti-hunt", went ahead and purchased their own underwater audio gear, then started an around-the-clock vigil at Neah Bay in anticipation of the Makah whalers setting off to kill a whale.

At that point, IC's involvement seemed to end.

It's been some years since IC has produced activities to promote living gray whales. In 1976, we directed an event sponsored by the state of California, to interact with grays as they migrated down the coast. In 1977, we collaborated with a group of artists called *The Ant Farm*, to anchor a radio transmitter offshore, making the calls of the grays audible to people via AM radio. In 1978, I entered the ocean off San Francisco, and played music to attract two gray whales as part of a funeral ceremony for a little boy whose last wish was that his ashes be scattered near the whales. In 1987, IC was called upon by Greenpeace and the US Army to evict three gray whales caught in an icehole off Barrow Alaska.

The Makah whaling issue did not go away. In September 1998, Makah Tribal Council member and outspoken whaling proponent Keith Johnson published a manifesto in the Sunday Seattle Times defending the tribe's resumption of whaling. Among other

statements, Johnson declared that the gray whale once brought enormous wealth to the tribe, as if to imply that killing a whale would somehow renew those riches today.

Activist Ben White of the Animal Welfare Institute took that statement at face value and concluded the obvious–that there was much greater wealth to be had from whalewatching than the Makah could possibly derive killing a whale. Working on his own, Ben went ahead to elicit pledges from several foundations to help subsidize the Makah in the development of a whalewatching program for Neah Bay. Because the Makah traditionally used the gray whale as a source of heating oil more than as a source for food, Ben also elicited a major pledge to provide a wind generating power system for Neah Bay.

In early November, Ben White was ready to make his pitch to the Makah Tribal Council. Believing that most tribal members had no inkling of the passions aroused around the world by this issue, Ben invited me along, to make a separate presentation about the public relations aspects of the Makah putsch to whaling.

A few days after our own presentations, Seattle Billionaire Craig McCaw sent a representative to Neah Bay to pledge support for various programs that will greatly enhance the quality of life for the tribe–in exchange for not killing a whale. Jean Michel Cousteau has since done much the same thing. In late November, members of the Sea Shepherd Society met with tribal leaders, with the result that Keith Johnson has since declared that "the Makah are now pursuing other options to the hunt." Sea Shepherd responded by pulling one of their ships away from Neah Bay.

As I write this newsletter in early December, no whales have been killed at Neah Bay. The outlook seems positive, although it is still premature to state with any certainty how the issue will eventually resolve itself.

What follows, is the report I prepared for the Makah Tribal Council.

In Harm's Way

This report illuminates the public relations aspect of the Makah whale hunt. If the analysis sometimes seems unsettling, please interpret it as observations of the public mood–and not necessarily reflecting my own personal feelings on the matter.

Speaking before the Makah Tribal Council last week, I attempted to give a historical grounding to the mass protest your people have endured since the whale permit was first granted. To reiterate, between 1978-87 literally millions of schoolchildren around the world wrote letters directly to the Japanese government, in protest of that nation's whaling industry. This outpouring was the first political activism for an entire generation of children. Because the campaign finally led to a cutback in the quota, it became a profound experience for every one involved. Those young letter writers are now adults, and although many of them no doubt support native rights, they all support whales.

The sheer number of people involved, and the passions aroused in them by their own contribution, inevitably bodes ill for your aim that the protest must eventually dissipate. Certainly your our own elders understand the will of the opposition when they are quoted saying that the Makah return to whaling must ultimately harm the cause of native rights and culture.

During my stay in Neah Bay, I heard tribespeople reiterate your written state ment about gray whales traditionally bringing riches to the Makah. The implication was that the current hunt would again bring riches. An unbiased observer would interpret "riches" in one of two ways: either as an idealistic statement in support of tribal values and traditions, or as an unintended corroboration of National Marine Fishery's documents disclosing the Tribal Council's intent to establish a market for gray whale meat. Despite the thoughtful claims put forth in the recently published Makah Manifesto, your tribe gains nothing by promoting the former position while it stands in direct opposition to public government documents widely circulated on the internet. These documents are, of course, the basis of accusations about the Makah being in collusion with the Japanese Whaling Industry.

Given my understanding of the Japanese marketplace, this connection has never made much sense. Sources in Japan tell me that, historically, the gray whale was eaten only in times of great hardship. The flesh was considered mildly toxic, tasting and smelling of sulphur because of the species' predilection for straining mud for food. This judgment is reflected by the Inupiat people of northern Alaska, who have been hunting and feasting on bowheads and belugas for millenia. The Inupiat refer to the gray whale as, "the whale that smells like shit." I suspect that your own ancestors ate the species only in strict moderation, perhaps as a ceremonial validation of a kill or, in times of severe hardship. At this point, the public seeks and deserves an unequivocal clarification of traditional usage.

Reseach indicates that the riches you refer to were traditionally derived from whale oil. A gray whale killed in the fall would have supplied substantial energy for heat and light through the winter. In the spirit of symbolic linkage, this conclusion gives much added weight to Ben White's proposal to supply a wind generation system (bringing heat and electricity to Neah bay in perpetuity) in trade for not killing a whale.

Since the Japanese whaling industry has no market for gray whale carcasses including the oil, the public naturally wonders why they would make a compact with your people they have no intention of keeping. I believe the answer can be found analysing the strategic thinking of the desperate institution of Japanese whaling.

Who can doubt that the worldwide campaign against whaling has severely impacted the Japanese industry's ability to show a profit? Their best hope to continue killing large numbers of whales is to divide and conquer the protesting nations. Offering financial and technical support to bolster a Makah treaty claim certainly upholds that strategic objective.

But for them to grant the Makah whaling technology in return for establishing a beach-head in the United

States, unavoidably places your tribe in harm's way. Whatever short term assistance you receive must be paid for in the very negative reputation you endure as accomplices to the internationally reviled Japanese whaling industry. Unfortunately, this scenario is already well-advanced, and explains why the Makah issue is much more often linked to Japan than to aboriginal cultures like the Inupiat.

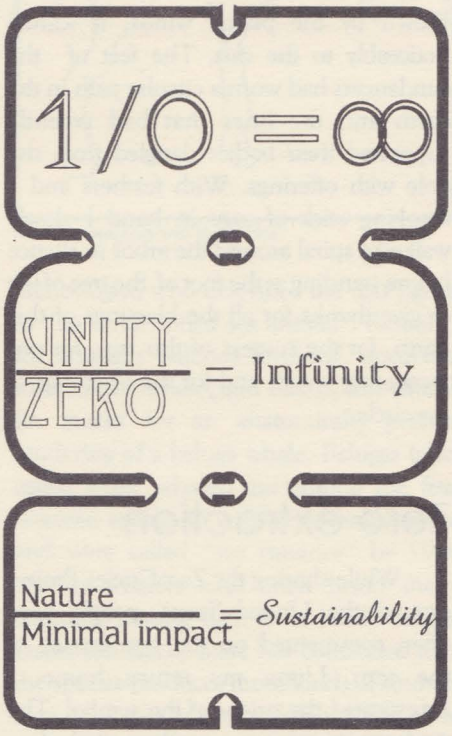
Economics aside, your spiritual claim is especially conspicuous in the public eye, and it is therefore impossible to avoid as an issue of public relations. Nothing in the public record indicates that anyone besides the elders acknowledges the explosiveness of your spiritual claim. Statements describing the issue as a Holy War may seem overly dramatic, but they are nonetheless accurate.

It is impossible these days to claim a spiritual dispensation to kill a creature as admired as a whale, and not expect public condemnation for it. Your own gray whale too easily emerges in the public imagination as a sacrificial victim, knocked off to rectify unspoken grievances and demands. Perhaps more troublesome to the public, is the Makah's activities in pursuit of this declared spiritual quest. When stones get thrown at protesters, when visitors get threatened for disagreeing, when tribal elders get expelled for asking to be consulted on an issue of deep community import, the public mainly perceives social and ethical hemorrhaging as the result of a spiritual stance. Such linkage inevitably discredits spirit.

All the evidence reveals this whaling issue to be a public relations disaster, not only for the Makah tribe, but possibly for all native people seeking to redress treaty claims never kept. In this light, exploring the value of the living whale as reflected in offers of assistance by Ben White, Craig McCaw, and Jean-Michel Cousteau seems a route worth exploring.

This report is not written with disrespect. If something about it rings true, or you'd like to probe deeper, you can contact me by email or fax and I will be glad to answer any questions you may have regarding anything written here. I am also happy to return to Neah Bay for a few days if a face-to-face conversation serves either you, the tribal council, or the Makah community as a whole. May this issue resolve itself without pain being visited on anyone. Peace be with you.

–Jim Nollman, December 1998



Daniel Dancer's ZeroCircles Project focuses on the creation of sculpture and photograph to promote a creative rethinking of the utility and appreciation of the US National Forest System. With over 50 circles now completed, and with articles of praise generated in newspapers and magazines around the country, this project is both a rousing success and one of IC's most original programs. We are happy to report that Daniel plans to continue the project through the winter. Here is his latest update.

ZeroCircles Update

by Daniel Dancer

5000 miles were behind me as I neared the conclusion of a ZeroCircles tour that led across Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virgina, Kentucky, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. I had given a dozen presentations and left behind twenty-five ZeroCircle creations in the national forests of these states in an effort to raise attention to the crisis in our forests and to promote the effort to achieve Zero Cut on public lands by the millennium. I built the final circle of the tour on the shore of a circular lake to highlight a revelation I had while traversing our eastern forests.

We are all accustomed to seeing the green shading of the areas called "National Forests" on our maps and thus regarding these regions as public lands. But less than half the area in the East depicted as National Forest actually represents land owned by the public. The rest are "purchase units", essentially the forest service's wish list of lands they would like to buy one day. Lands within these forests that exist only on paper often turned out to be coal mines, small towns and factory farms. The much reduced size of the Forest system in my own mind, seemed to offer more impetus to speak out for a zero cut.

I used wood chips taken from a Grand Rapids chip mill to convey the half-owned 'paper nature' of our national forests east of the Missouri River. Like most eastern forests, the trees cut in the Minnesota's Chipewa National Forest are chipped into pieces like those I used to cast my lake side zero–a circle of chips half on the sand and half floating on the water. I watched as the water-borne half-circle slowly broke apart and began to drift in the direction of two loons that had been watching from a distance. It had been absolutely quiet until the loons sang their beautiful ghostly cry and heavily flew off. Their call seemed a signal for my leaving.

When I answered the loons with a yell, my echoing voice sounded strangely like the ringing of a crystal bowl. It was such a beguiling sound that I yelled again and again not quite believing this auditory phenomenon to be possible. The circular tune confirmed for me the power of the circle and it's significance as a symbol for our time. I could not have written a more fitting conclusion to my trip.

But nature could and did. Blasting down the interstate the following morning in Southern Minnesota, I was on the last leg of a circuitous route that began three weeks earlier in Kansas City. The fall

colors had been dazzling and I was grateful for the sun as well as for the warm reception I got from everyone along the way.

I decided to detour a bit and visit a place that had always held my curiosity: Pipestone National Monument near the border of Minnesota and South Dakota, and one of the most sacred native sites in North America. Pipestone is the source of the red stone pipes which Native Americans use to send their highest prayers to the Great Spirit.

The morning fog was dense as I walked along the pathway leading to the quarries. Rising in the distance, appearing and disappearing in the fog, I spotted a tall three-branched pole that seemed to be draped with tattered cloth. I knew it was the sundance pole–the ritual tree of life that rose from the center of the Lakota's circular arbor.

Pipestone is the home of the largest Sundance ceremony in the country. I felt an urge to visit the pole, although I was held back by respect for the protocol of visiting another culture's sacred site. I came to a waterfall that poured out of a cliff rising unexpectedly from the flat plain. I forgot about my dilemma, and marveled at the beauty of this place. My imagination carried me back hundreds of years. I pictured antelope and buffalo grazing beside the stream in safety as warriors worked the nearby quarry. This was sacred land and tribes that came here to collect pipestone had rules that forbade hunting.

I left the trail to wander along the edge of the cliff looking down upon the prairie and the tumbling stream. A thought popped into my mind. I humbly asked permission to visit the pole. At that instant a great horned owl burst from an oak tree ahead of me and flew off in the direction of the Sundance circle.

I was astonished. I had recently read about a technique for tapping the spontaneity of our mind and its connection to nature to aid one in making difficult decisions. By not fretting over my conflict, but allowing it to burst forth unbidden, I received an answer. In such a manner, the final circle of the journey soon manifested itself.

After three weeks of constructing zeros out of found materials, and gathering activists together to make circles in the forest, I approached the large circular sundance arbor surrounded by circular sweat lodges. The sixty foot tall tree of life pole was stained ochre with bison blood. Blown by the prairie winds, it leaned noticeably to the east. The feet of the sundancers had worn a circular path in the earth and the lines that had recently supported their bodies dangled from the pole with offerings. With feathers and a smoking stick of sage in hand I slowly walked a spiral around the arbor in silence before standing at the foot of the tree of life to give thanks for all the blessings of this Earth, for the success of this trip, for our recovering forests and for the teachings of the circle.

Zero extraction

While sharing the ZeroCircles Project around the United States, people have often commented on the significance of the zero. Upon my return home, I investigated the origin of the symbol. The Arabs invented it as a mathematical place holder about 900 years ago. They could have chosen a slash, a dash, a triangle or any number of symbols to be the place holder. The fact that they chose a circle makes the zero seem especially powerful. For the first time since the zero's invention, we will have three of them in the millennium date: 2000.

Looking up *zero* in the Oxford English Dictionary, I discovered this quote by the 19th century philosopher, Thomas Carlyle: "Unless my algebra fails me, Unity itself divided by Zero will give Infinity." One might understand this quote as a sustainability equation. Nature (Unity) divided by minimal impacts (Zero) leads to Sustainability (Infinity). Or put more simply–Living in harmony with nature is infinitely sustainable.

Achieving zero extraction on public lands would be a huge step towards balancing this equation and is a goal well deserving of more public attention. Zero cut legislation will likely be debated in the 1999 legislative session. During this time, I am hopeful that the ZeroCircles Project can play a role in stimulating and educating the public about the importance of protecting our public lands.

Fifty ZeroCircles have now been completed by myself and others in 20 states. These circles, and more to come, are posted on the ZeroCircles website at:

WWW.ZEROCIRCLES.COM.

Karelia Conference

By Jim Nollman

Scandinavian bedrock is adorned in many places with petroglyphs dating before 5000 BC. Images run the gamut from moose, swans, whales, ships, astronomical motifs, men with giant hands, battle scenes, and depictions of village life so effusive in their detail that they might have inspired Breughel. No one can say for certain whether this art was created by Finno-Ugric people (Ugric meaning Hungarian), or by ancient Saamis (Lapplanders).

Some of the best petroglyph sites are in Karelia, the Russian Republic that shares a long western border with Finland. Well into this century Karelia and Finland have comprised a unified culture even though Finland came under Swedish domination from the Middle Ages, while Karelia has been controlled by Russia since the time of Peter the Great. Much of the oral folklore upon which the Finnish epic poem, *The Kalevala*, is based was actually collected in Karelia.

This common heritage altered when Stalin conscripted hundreds of thousands of ethnic Karelians and other nationalities into labor camps during the 1930s to construct a canal connecting the Baltic Sea with the Arctic Ocean. So many people perished on the project that, today, Karelia's population includes about half ethnic Russians and Ukrainians. Despite the upheaval, Karelian cities still display street and shop signs in both Finnish and Russian.

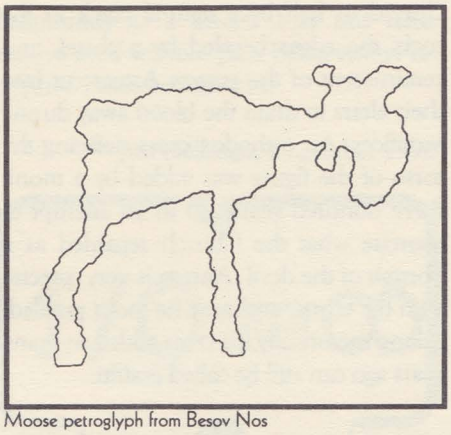
With the new Russia experiencing economic meltdown, the provincial Karelian government increasingly turns to its prosperous Scandinavian neighbors for economic aid and co-development projects that re-establish their common heritage. This latter prerogative explains the primary reason IC's Finnish representative, Rauno Lauhakangas organized an international conference this past September on petroglyphs in collaboration with the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Rauno's secondary reason for organizing the conference relates to his passion for whales. One of the best known Karelian sites on the White Sea displays several reliefs that depict human beings interacting with cetaceans. Many scholars believe they are the oldest pictures of whales found anywhere in the world. The fact that belugas still reside in the White Sea, has suggested to Rauno that whale-watching tied to a program of petroglyph interpretation could provide the spark to ignite Karelian tourism. Because Russia was one of the world's most active whaling nations until ten years ago, the current economic pessimism could easily entice them to start it up again, perhaps focusing on coastal species like belugas. But if whalewatching is established on the White Sea, it will obviate the resurrection of whaling, while contributing one more building block to the edifice of Karelian self-sufficiency.

Sea Canaries

Upon viewing Mayan hieroglyphs for the first time, The poet Charles Olson observed that the same mystery that poses a dead-end for archeologists offers ripe ground for poets. Olson's postulate explains why I was invited to the conference; the lone non-European in the delegation, an American author and nature consultant who works with themes pertaining to human/animal protocol. Two years ago I staged a theatrical performance on the subject of shamanism in Helsinki, which was promoted by a poster displaying the petroglyph shown on the first page of this newsletter.

The only previous assessment of this glyph was made by a Russian



Moose petroglyph from Besov Nos

archeologist, who described the rear figure as "an unidentified sea animal". Actually, the animal's bulbous forehead, upcurved rostrum, blowhole, and lack of true dorsal fin makes for an anatomically precise rendering of a beluga whale. Belugas (also called white whales) are among the few cetacean species to vocalize naturally in air and were called "sea canaries" by 19th century whalers who often heard them chortling among their own kind. Beluga researcher Becky Sjare has concluded that the species produces more kinds of sounds than any other whale or dolphin. Dolphin communication pioneer, John Lilly, has described belugas as the best animal candidate for interspecies language research.

I have heard belugas vocalizing in the Canadian Arctic. Their calls reminded me, not of canaries, but of voices heard through a wall, obscuring the words, although the rise and fall of intonation suggests a conversation is occuring. Tribes residing along the shore of the White Sea five thousand years ago would have experienced similar communicative behavior among the belugas they saw every day.

The figure in the foreground of the petroglyph has been described as a "humanoid wielding a weapon". The position of the arms and the shape of the objects more likely endorse the performance of a musical instrument similar to clavès.

There are many documented examples of traditional cultures developing ceremonies ornamented by music that reflects animal vocalizations. Taking this basic idea one step further, I have played music with several different whale species, including belugas, sometimes inducing them to improvise melodies and rhythms.

This is nothing new. Australian aboriginal shamans have been documented clicking similar "dolphin sticks" underwater as part of a remarkable ceremony of interspecies cooperation. Animals respond to the clicking by corralling fish ashore which are then gathered by the people. The Imragen of Mauretania achieve much the same fishing relationship with dolphins by beating branches on the water, an event documented by Jacques Cousteau in the 1960s.

Traveling in Norway in the 11th century, the monk Adam of Bremen, wrote of observing the Saami: "persuade huge whales to come to shore by murmuring chants with powerful words." Commenting on the text, Icelandic whaling historian, Ole Lindquist, asserts that the Latin phrase *murmure verborum* refers to a style of overtone or throat singing still in use by Saamis today.

I myself have attracted beluga whales by clicking "dolphin sticks" underwater, and can attest that friction demands the arms be splayed much as depicted in the image in order to strike the sticks together with sufficient force to produce a sound.

It seems pertinent that the Russian ethnomusicologist, Alla Ablova, has discovered percussive lithophones (musical instruments constructed of stone) at excavations near the Karelian sites. All these examples, make it seem plausible, if not likely, that beluga whales were not only a principle totem of the ancient Scandinavians, but correspondents as well.

Some scholars argue that the shaman in this petroglyph has been caught at the moment of shape-shifting, his penis transformed into whale flukes. Others disagree, pointing to the swell of the figure's breast to pronounce the shaman a woman giving birth to a whale.

All across the Arctic fables describe marriages between humans and whales. In a Yakut version, the baby whale is adopted by the tribe and kept in a special bucket by the side of his mother' tent until he outgrows it, at which point he is freed into the sea. When foreign whalers arrive, they kill the adopted whale. The tribe responds to this violence by attacking the strangers. The Yakuts tell this story to explain how warfare first came to the human beings.

Graffiti

At the end of the conference, we board Boris Yeltsin's hundred foot motor yacht for an overnight trip across the huge inland sea of Lake Onega to the Besov Nos (Devil's Nose) petroglyph site. Most of our party chooses to go ashore before dawn to view the rocks by one of the archeologists' favored methods, a flashlight shined at an acute angle to highlight the shadows and sharpen the edges of the glyphs. I sleep in, which is the reason I am one of only three delegates in the first boat ashore in the morning. My companions are the Finnish art historian, Antero Kare, and Alla Ablova, who speaks no English.

It is cold, the morning drizzly and overcast. Arriving on a dazzling purple sand beach tinted by offshore amethyst deposits, we head off through a spruce forest. The duff sprouts several species of mushrooms including the psychedelic (and toxic) red-and-white muscaria, reputedly eaten by Eurasian shamans as fuel for trance. Continuing onto a low headland overlooking the lake, the trees part before a sweeping expanse of granite.

We are suddenly standing in the midst of the petroglyphs; obscure shapes chipped out of the bedrock, most of them less than an eighth of an inch deep, dimly revealing silhouetted profiles of moose, swans, a sturgeon, three men in a boat harpooning a seal. Antero explains the predominant swans as Finnish symbols of death, totem angels who flew departed Finnish souls to the Golden Land of peace and prosperity. He guides me forward to several circles and crescents with short parallel lines jutting from one side, which he interprets as the sun and the moon. I smile to recognize the figures' resemblance to muscaria mushrooms caught at two phases in their bloom cycle.

Closer to the water lie more dramatic carvings, three six-foot long images ostensibly chipped out of the rock by a single individual. The figure on the right is a lizard-like creature Antero identifies as an otter. On the left is a cylinder-shaped fish with whiskers on one end, probably a catfish. The center figure is distinctly cubist, comprised of several adjoining shapes that form a muppet-like face with eyes and mouth, arms, legs, a torso. The figure is cleaved in half by a natural crack in the rock, the edges beveled by a chisel, and reminiscent of the gutters Aztecs cut into their altars to drain the blood away during sacrifices. An orthodox cross defacing the torso of the figure was added by a monk three hundred years ago in an attempt to exorcise what the Church regarded as a portrait of the devil. Antero is very precise with his terms, and now he looks puzzled, asking rhetorically if a cross added so many years ago can still be called graffiti.

Archeologist Vaino Poikalainen has advised me to be on the lookout for an angular lightning bolt with slight "wings" extending from each vertex, and capped by a triangular head which suggests a snake, even an adder. Antero helps me find it half-submerged in the lake. I pay close attention to the small waves surging across the figure. When viewed in a certain light, eddies swirl around the "wings", blurring the angles and bestowing the snake with an uncanny slithering motion. Vaino believes this animated effect is too obvious to be accidental, and that it must have granted enormous social status to the stone age Walt Disney who carved it.

Despite these wonders, my first impression is of anticlimax. The figures are cut more shallow than I expected, and difficult to distinguish in the overcast light of a gloomy morning. When Antero bends over the human figure to point out spirals, stars, and circles carved into the torso, I can not even see them.

Discouragement fades when Alla and Antero drift off to visit another nearby site. The solitude tugs at me, pulling my mind away from thoughts of judgement, and into a space of tranquillity I had not expected; as if the rock, the lake and the art conspired to draw me inside a chapel built to worship nature for all of eternity. The longer I linger, the deeper I plunge into the void of the moment.

I envision a naked man spending an entire month on this rock, patiently chipping away at the slab with an assortment of stone tools. Finally he stands back to admire his handiwork, then jogs into the forest to gather his clan together. They stride out onto the rock to admire the reflected image of their totem allegiance. I sit quietly on the sweep of the Besov Nos for a brief hour, gazing at the badly eroded silhouette of a moose, and reflecting on the timeless concepts of patriotism, spirituality, and creativity.

Looking vs. Seeing

On the voyage back to Petrozavodsk, Andrei Spiridonov, Karelian Minister for International Programs, stops me on deck to pointedly ask why I am here. Taken aback by his uncommonly deep voice, I answer perfunctorily that, just like him, I've come to see the petroglyphs. When I mention this encounter to Rauno, his face lights up, he smacks his fist, then announces that the moment has come to introduce whalewatching to the Karelians.

An hour later, Rauno asks me to join a meeting attended by Andrei and Mark Shahnovic, of the Karelian Regional Museum. The Russians express little hope of enticing Western Europeans and Americans to Karelia while the tourism infrastructure remains so under-developed. I mention the many large boats I noticed in Petrozavodsk, and suggest that excursion-style whalewatching could begin almost immediately. Andrei confides that he knows little about whalewatching, then asks, "Are you suggesting that tourists will pay money to see whales?" Rauno has been preparing for this question for months, and he immediately starts spewing statistics about the growth of whale-based tourism in Iceland and Norway.

With the discussion underway, I beg to be excused. My mind isn't working properly, some part of it left behind on the lakeshore trying to fathom the meaning of life seen in the image of an eroded moose. Everyone I see on the boat is transformed to a petroglyph, mutated into a chipped-out silhouette of themselves writing in a journal, tipping a vodka bottle into a glass, the cook peeling potatos, a crew member hoisting a monstrous four foot pike caught while the rest of us were ashore.

I fly home. Then weeks pass, during which IC webworker Gigi Coyle sends me a clipping from the Inyo Register in eastern California, describing a local Shoshone protest against white people visiting a petroglyph site near Owens Lake. Spokesperson Pauline Esteves announces that her tribe's sacred images "are not there for people to look at."

The notion that tourism desecrates sacred sites seems all but lost in this age where every cathedral and shrine solicits tourists to enter and walk around, even gazing at worshippers as if they were actors hired to grant the place an aura of authenticity. When I call Gigi to thank her for the story, she adds that the Shoshone controversy is more about native hegemony than a bonified concern about the site's desecration. The only people who ever go there have to appreciate the art, because to even get there one has to walk far into the desert.

I email the news story to Rauno, who responds in his usual creative manner. "The Shoshone 'see' the petroglyphs, and can not tolerate strangers arriving merely to 'look' at them. To bolster this statement, he tells me that the Lake Onega site is now open only to scholars who appreciate their cultural value. Locals are kept out because they deface the petroglyphs with graffiti.

And In the End...

When the Soviets banned independent thought, they left a vacuum in the memory of the people. Now that the old regime has departed to Krushchev's ashbin of history, one imagines the vacuum filling up with any number of alternative worldviews. The two most often cited for Karelia are the agnostic, democratic socialism that holds sway in the rest of Scandinavia, and the mean-spirited autocratic capitalism that currently drives the Russian Mafia.

Charles Olson's postulate permits an idealistic alternative that portrays the Karelians appropriating practical aspects of conventional politics, but also initiating a revitalized version of their own ancient nature religion. The concept of environmentalism merging with religion and economics already grows strong among European visionaries, codified by the Norwegian philosopher, Arne Naess, and popularized by the Finnish Green Party who regard eco-culture as the only tenable politics for the 21st century.

If this "deep ecology", with its reconstructed murmurs of totemism and sacred sites ever takes hold in Karelia, obviously, the petroglyphs–and possibly the whales as well–will emerge as arbiters of its disclosure. Since the Karelian people serve as gatekeepers to the European entry of the greatest intact ecosystem on the planet, the moose, swans, otters, seals and whales inhabiting the vast Siberian wilderness would emerge as unanticipated victors of this alternate outcome. On that note, one might imagine the old totemic shamans smiling down on Karelia from their high perch in the golden land, then raising cups to toast the successful delivery of their message after all these years.

Please read This

IC is constantly seeking ways to become more self-sufficient and therefore less reliant on foundation and patronage support. Toward this goal, we have published the newsletter for twenty-one years, and use it as our main outreach to draw in members whose yearly donations support office overhead and the newsletter's own expenses. Actually, we are proud to announce that our membership is currently at an all time high. So please keep your memberships updated, and consider a gift membership fo a friend.

IC also produces and sells audio cassettes of our music with whales. The best known and most successful of these musical offerings is *Orcas Greatest Hits*, comprised of excerpts from the IC Orca Project, which brought over 200 people to northern Vancouver Island over an eight year period to make music with wild orcas. Since its release, IC has sold over 2000 copies of this music.

To take better control of our media products, IC needs to develop the capability to publish art and music documents in-house. For example, *Orcas Greatest Hits*, can neither be updated nor reproduced without a hefty outlay of money to a Seattle music studio that currently sells our own product back to us in batches of 100 at a time. Hiring a recording studio to convert OGH to CD format would cost a prohibitive $2500. But if we had our own multimedia computer system we could convert any part of our library of whale sounds to a digital format, continually update it with new recordings, and burn our own CDs in-house–*and* one-at-a-time to avoid storage problems. With the addition of a digital video camera we could produce CD-ROM documents of our field projects and sell them to the general public.

The most crucial aspect of our current drive to become more self-sufficient is developing a more forceful presence on the Internet. Two years ago, IC established a homepage on the very popular Lycos whalewatching web which receives up to 10,000 hits a day. Our own node within the larger site was designed by the webmaster based in Helsinki Finland and is currently managed by him. Although the site is rarely updated, and consists almost entirely of text reprints of our newsletters, it has already resulted in a 30% growth in membership. This increase convinces us that redesigning and managing our own website will dramatically increase membership and give us a huge boost toward our eventual goal of self-sufficiency.

Taking control of our website means licensing a domain name, redesigning the pages to include photos, film and sound clips about ongoing projects, and updating links to our international network of colleague organizations. We would include a discussion forum, so people all over the world could tell their own stories of interacting with animals and 'chat' about their animal dreams. We would compile a database about whale and dolphin

(continued on next page)